

SLAVERY.

From the "HULL ROCKINGHAM" of January 31, 1824.

WITH some inconvenience to ourselves, we have inserted, at length, in our last page, a letter on this subject, written, we believe, by a very respectable gentleman of Liverpool. The insertion is, partly, at the request of a friend, and partly, because it is only right to hear what the adversary in a cause has to say for himself. Mr. SANDARS, it will be seen, has a great deal to say; and, with those who have so little argument on their side, we have not been surprised to find, that his observations have proved highly acceptable.—Upon us, they have had no effect but an anxious desire to circulate, as far as we can, a publication which is considered, by the anti-emancipationists, as a sort of *chef d'œuvre*, but than which we have seen nothing that so clearly demonstrates the rottenness of the cause it is intended to support. Mr. SANDARS, it would appear, is an *abstract* enemy of slavery.—*Abstractedly*, he considers it impolitic and inhuman. *Practically*, he asserts it to be "the foundation of government," and "the reciprocation of tyranny and slavery, as necessary to support society in its origin." Now, this is what we cannot understand. We can neither conceive how that which is in theory impolitic and inhuman, can be necessary, nor how it is possible that slavery can be the foundation of government. No state of society, much less a state antecedent to society, can be conceived,

where men are *all* slaves. Slavery implies the pre-existence of tyranny ; and all history proves, that it has been the result of the exercise of power, sometimes acquired by fraud and violence and sometimes by the free-will of those who have been its victims. And, to shew how little Mr. SANDARS has understood himself, and what little benefit he has derived from first principles, we need only quote a sentence not removed from the above more than five lines.—“Slavery is the institution of ignorance and tyranny.” Slavery cannot easily be both the institution of ignorance and tyranny, and the foundation of government, the simplest form of which he designates by the word tyranny ; that would be making, as, in fact, he has made it, tyranny the institution of slavery, and slavery the institution of tyranny. May we not properly ask in what school Mr. SANDARS has learnt his logic, as well as his history. He says, that tyranny has existed in all ages, and all countries. Perhaps, he will contend that ADAM was the first tyrant ; but we do not read that ADAM had any slaves, between whom and him there could be a reciprocation. Leaving, however, the pursuit of this point, let us refer to the conclusion drawn from the asserted facts, that slavery has existed in all ages, and all countries, and that there is still a great portion of it left, which is destined, in his opinion, to last “centuries to come.” What is this conclusion ?—Why, forsooth, that we should do well “not to disregard the instruction of time.” Who, of the abolitionists, have disregarded the instruction of time ? We be-

lieve, that it is the instruction of time, that is now impelling them to the efforts they are making. This instruction has told them, that nothing but their incessant exertions will wipe away the guilt of the crime, which, as he justly observes, the whole nation has committed, of rendering slavery a part and parcel of the law of the land. How has the instruction of time operated on the great body of planters? How is it operating now? and, had it not been for the efforts of the abolitionists, would slavery have been a whit nearer abolition than it was a hundred years ago? Mr. SANDARS says, that the instruction of time shews that the improvement of mankind has been very slow, and that those who think it has not been sufficiently rapid, "must be prepared to prove that the order of nature and events has no necessary connexion." Of all the extraordinary positions in the way of argument we ever read, this is the most extraordinary. The order of nature and events! Now, what is the order of nature here pointed to? Why, that slavery is the natural state of man! Yet, he says that slavery is everywhere diminishing, and that he is not without hopes it will continue to diminish. He is the person, then, who proves that the order of nature and events has no connexion; for his events are all contradicting that order, very slowly, but surely, and preparing the way, after some centuries, for actually destroying it in the West Indies. It has been our way of thinking, that for the people of one country to invade another, and by force of arms to carry away the

inhabitants of the latter, placing them, subsequently, in the state of domestic animals, was reversing the order of nature, as well as violating the common principles of justice ; and that the sooner the better, the disorder was corrected. Verbal criticism is not our object on this occasion, or we might say a word or two on this phrase, "order of nature and events has no necessary connexion;" it is sufficient, at present, to observe upon it, that it distinctly marks the disorder of the writer's mind,—for he must either mean something very different from the obvious meaning of his words, or be utterly unacquainted with the order of nature or the course of events, of which, the former is always the same, whilst the latter, as learnt from the annals of all ages and all countries, has been varied in a thousand ways, and often quite contradictory in two adjoining countries.—The avowed intention of this long letter is to slacken the efforts of the friends of negro emancipation.—Its only result will be the exposition of the writer to much ridicule ; for surely such a tissue of sophistries and incongruities, put forward with so much solemnity, never appeared. Throughout the whole, the wide difference between the state of societies in countries where a large portion of the natives are degraded, and by ignorance and imposition, made satisfied with their degradation ; and that in the West Indies, where one description of men have been torn from their native country by another, and converted into beasts of burden, is kept out of view ; and of those injured men, whom he, in the true spirit

of the religion of JESUS, describes as *imperfect machines*, he says, "to their ignorance I would concede more than to their claims; their ignorance excites our compassion, but their claims do not;" nor, as far as we can read him, their sufferings. These are not even noticed by him. And why, indignant reader, do not their claims excite his compassion? (very curious phraseology again) "because they are suggested by others, and can only be considered as like those of a *minor*, vested, it is true, *but not come into possession* until the parties are capable of enjoying them." Luminous beyond all precedent! Then, honest claims are good for nothing, when suggested by others. Charming morality! The claims of a *minor* too are good for nothing, "vested, it is true," &c. What is meant by claims come into possession when the parties are capable of enjoying them, we shall not undertake to explain; but, adopting the same language, we will ask Mr. SANDARS, if, as he says, it must be some centuries before the emancipation of the negroes, there be any sense in talking about their minority, or vested claims, or possession or enjoyment of them. This admission of vested claims must have been a slip of his pen, but for its sake we excuse the nonsense of the sentence. It is an admission of claims, however, which it is the whole purpose of his letter to annihilate, which according to his own assertion cannot be converted into possession by any living slave, nor many succeeding generations. He does well not to advocate such claims. He would have been more consistent

had he left them unnoticed. Nothing can so fully demonstrate the wickedness of slavery as such an admission and assertion of disability of enjoyment. We trust the author will live to see the incorrectness of the latter position, and that, after this avowed malignity of the disease, the efforts of the enemies of slavery will become proportionally vigorous. It ought not to be endured, that, in the British dominions, there are 800,000 human beings, with vested claims to the rights of men, in a state of bondage, described as *imperfect machines*, and no more possessed of the power of self-direction than the very domestic animals. We are not surprised that the cause Mr. SANDARS has undertaken to defend has mystified his understanding. Hear him again. He was originally a member of the society for abolition. Up to a certain period he felt no remorse for what the society had done. He yet coincides in the abstract views of the impolicy and inhumanity of slavery. In this letter, subsequently to what we have quoted, he says, speaking of the slave population, "to give such persons knowledge is to give them power; and I am distrustful of almost any scheme, *which is to direct and govern their passions*, the whirlwinds of half-informed minds," concluding some further observations with this remarkable one,—“I know, that which is generally understood by emancipation must and will take place.” Yet the very holder of this opinion deprecates the communication of knowledge, and is actually distrustful of almost any scheme which is to *direct and govern* the passions, the

whirlwinds of half-informed minds, *alias* imperfect *machines* ! Was ever any thing like this written before ? We always thought that the great preparative for emancipation was knowledge, which might direct and govern the passions of the injured, and never contemplated it but in conjunction with a long series of instruction. We do not know what else is to govern the passions of wholly-informed minds ? But we must have done with quotation. We have said enough to expose his flimsiness, and the futility of his attempt to bolster up a bad cause. The rest of his letter is of a piece with what we have noticed, and we have no doubt that every abolitionist will rise from the perusal of it, more and more determined to persevere in vindicating the "vested claims" of the negro population. If West India negroes are only *imperfect machines*, whose is the fault ? And what right has any possessor either to an imperfect or perfect machine, which he has stolen from the lawful owner ? Mr. SANDARS cannot be more anxious than every abolitionist that tranquillity should be preserved, and if it be not preserved, the fault will not be ours. We wish neither for precipitation nor injustice. Mr. SANDARS advocates the continuance of what he describes as impolitic and inhuman. We think that it cannot be corrected too soon. But, thus thinking, we have never lost sight either of regard to the slaves or the planters. We know as well as he does that emancipation now would be no blessing to either. For that very reason we urge gradual improvement

and the infusion of knowledge.--We know of no other feasible expedient. It always has succeeded. It will succeed here if prudently employed. Of the iniquity of making property of human beings, this gentleman makes no account, which to the great moralist, DR. JOHNSON, appeared so atrocious, that he used to give, as his favourite toast, "the speedy insurrection of the negro slaves." We have no such wish. Of the dignity of human nature, under a dusky hue, he has no idea, but undisguisedly degrades his fellow rational beings, the creatures of his own God, into imperfect machines. Upon the effects of kind treatment and conciliation, he turns his back, though he cannot but know that those are the sure and effectual means of effacing the recollection of wrongs. If these had been properly followed up, since the abolition of the slave trade, there need not, at this moment, have been a slave in the West Indies; the islands would have literally become the country of the population, and security would have reigned throughout them.—But blacks, in a warm climate, will not work, unless compelled by the whip, or some other similar forcible inducement, and we shall have less sugar than we have. "Aye, there's the rub." Sugar *versus* justice and humanity! We may leave this point where it is. Ours is the cause of justice and humanity; pursuing it by fair, constitutional, and prudential means, we trust to Providence for its success. Justice and humanity never did and never can do harm, whatever may be the fate of sugar.